

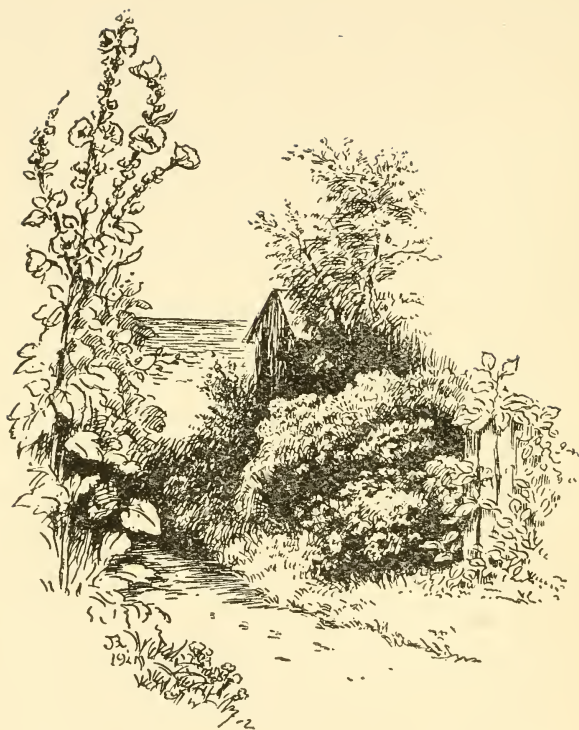
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LITTLE BOOK OF GARDEN SONGS



“Whispers and smells of the sea”

LITTLE BOOK OF GARDEN SONGS

BY
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WITH DRAWINGS BY J. RANDOLPH BROWN



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LITTLE BOOK OF GARDEN SONGS



"Dewy paths where fairies pass"

GARDEN OF LONG AGO

Queen Anne's lace and sparrow grass,
Garden pinks and fern,
Dewy paths where fairies pass
When fire-fly lanterns burn.

Shadows where the holly-hocks
Clustered by the wall
Back of phlox and four-o'clocks
Grow so straight and tall.

Garden of my childhood dreams
In memory to dwell,
Sweeter seems than ever gleams
From aught but magic's spell.

LARKSPUR AND LILIES TALL

Larkspur and lilies tall,
Poppies blood-red,
Bloom by a garden wall,
Blue sky o'erhead.
All out-door blossoms these,
Sturdy and strong,
Kissed by the summer breeze
The whole day long.

Lark, bee and humming-bird
All loiter here
And by sheer gladness stirred
Thrushes sing clear.
A sheltered place is this,
Peaceful and still,
Green fields around and high
One sheltering hill.

Bring me your blossoms all,
Come, children dear!
Sit with me by this wall;
We'll weave them here,
Larkspur and lilies tall,
Poppies blood-red,
Fragrance and grace recall
Beauty long dead.

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"Larkspur and lilies tall"

DREAM-FLOWERS

In my mother's garden are growing
Flowers I used to see,
And a soft wind is ever blowing
That whispers and smells of the sea.

Now and then through the hours
My curtains sway in the air
And set me to dreaming of flowers
Like the painted blossoms there.

Flowers born in the sunshine and nurtured by wind
and rain.
I seize them and hold them and love them, though I
never shall walk there again!

THE PINE-TREE

The pine-tree's branches are darkly green
And it grows so straight and high
As though it made for the flowers a screen
Against the burning sky.

In the deepest shade the flowers are few
Who choose in that spot to grow.
But crocuses do and violets blue
With yellow and white for show.

But against its greenness the flowers all
Show in lovely silhouette.
There are lilies and larkspur and fox-glove tall
And poppies and mignonette.

And the spicy breath of the pine-tree blends
With the scent of the flowers there
As its height to the humble garden lends
A gravely distinguished air.

IN FAR JAPAN

In far Japan the iris grow
On the roofs of the houses there.
Fair in the sunshine planted, the fragrance sweet
 does go
With every breeze through the stunted trees
In those Japanese gardens fair.

It is an isle of blossoms sweet
And the little people know
Secrets we blindly grope for, so delicate, so fleet,
Is the magic they, in their foreign way,
Use to make their flowers grow.

FORSAKEN

I know a garden where the daffodils
And crocuses grow wild and every spring
Untended, show their colors. Sweetness fills
The air and strangers pause to drink it in.
Palsied the hand that planted. Still they bring
Sweet memories of care that theirs has been.

SWEET WINDS THAT BLOW

Sweet winds that blow,
And bring the scent of blossoms back to me
From an old garden planted by the sea
Loved long ago.

Down streets that wind
With turnings well-remembered from my youth,
Past door-ways stark and unadorned as truth,
My way I'd find.

For I could go
Blind-folded, so my memory holds the place
And know again each gentle kindly face
I used to know.

Sweet winds that blow
And bring the scent of blossoms back to me
From an old garden planted by the sea
Loved long ago.



"Down streets that wind"

THE WORRIED GARDENER

It is cold and the wind grows colder.

I fear for my flowers so.

They need the sun till they're older.

They have only started to grow.

I can not cover them over

For the wind blows the blanket away.

He acts like a spiteful rover.

I have fought with him all the day.

All my way to school and returning

I faced the cold and the rain.

If my cheeks could share their burning,

My flowers would be warm again.

BLUE BELLS

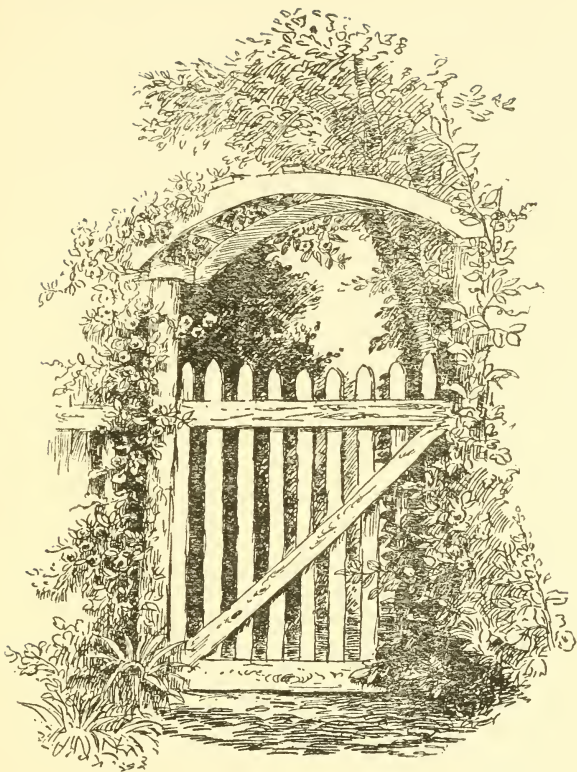
Pendant bells like joy-bells ringing,
Breath of woodland sweetness bringing.
Sun and air and wood-birds singing
 Blue-bells meant to me.

Childhood's roaming and exploring
Shady paths, old joys restoring,
Laughter, love and youth's out-pouring,
 You recall to me.

THE WICKET GATE

They wanted a wicket gate to be
Where the garden should begin.
They planned it beautiful to see
For it shuts the flowers in.

They made for it an arch all new,
And planted there a rose.
Oh, it does show a lovely view
When you turn the gate to close!



"The wicket gate"

TRANSPLANTED

Hidden away in a corner I know
Are shy woods' flowers that used to grow
Far from the haunts of men.
They whisper of days that shall be no more
But sheltered safe they bloom at my door
As sweetly as they bloomed then.

For the warm sun finds them here as there
And the first spring breezes blow as fair,
As gently wake them here
From their dreams as sweet as in vanished days
When they nestled far from our trodden ways
And they wake with the waking year.

THERE IS A DAY IN SPRING

There is a day in spring, a moment rather
When all the joys of all the year are pressed
Into one brimming measure, and the town
New-washed and fragrant sweet, appears to gather
A robe of gauze, transparent, to a breast
That beats in kindliness beneath the gown.
Then all the tender green or arching trees
And all the spring-time scents that fill the air,
Streets framed in beauty, evanescent, rare,
Bring some fantastic lightening of care
And men laugh, sing, forget life's dull decrees
Or with new courage run their task to seize,
Finding it, too, transfigured and as fair.

SUMMER NIGHT

Night slowly closes in and gently comes
The dark, soft stealing in, encircling us
With many soft and fragrant murmurings
As sinks to rest all nature. Drowsy hums
Some insect round the door where luminous
The radiance attracts them. Whisperings
Of birds that hidden somewhere in the trees
Keep up their soft-voiced chirping through the night,
And distant first, then near, an owl's long trill
Are all that breaks the stillness. Fresh the breeze
Springs up and brings a radiant new delight
From blossoms stirring that but now were still.



"Summer night"

THE CONNOISSEUR

They look so gay on their slender stems
All in their bright red and yellow,
Massed where the tangled shrubbery hems
The tidy lawn, and the sunlight mellow
Picks out their colors like wonderful gems
So lighting their corner, a much duller fellow
Than I would know tulips, all bright red and yellow.

EARLY-BLOOMING TULIPS

All so proud and arrogant you're growing,
Tulips in a row!
Steady face the April wind a-blowing
As you'd face a foe.
Gaily dressed, your colors so deceiving
Breathe no perfume, no sweet fragrance leaving.
Proud you are and haughty past believing,
Tulips in a row.

DARWIN TULIPS

Colors to please an artist the Darwin tulip shows,
Graceful and tall and lovely in mauve and purple and
 rose

Like ladies all dressed for a party, gracious and
 gentle and fair,

They light up the whole glad garden in their new
 spring colors there.

MY TREE

In spring my tree is like a lovely out-stretched fan
Whose feather tips are leafy fronds so fair and
delicate against the sky.

Its tender colors run the gamut through
Showing in turn each lovely tint and new
As day does die.

Stirred by the wind's touch gentle tremors run
Through all the tracery. The whole as one
Stirs and is swayed like some fair woman's fan.

CANTERBURY BELLS

What poet named you Canterbury bells?
What artist looked into your lovely face
And found fit naming for your sturdy grace?
Blue sky as England's own above you bends.
Greensward like that of England round you here
Enchantment makes, and bees from far and near
Circle you round. Their cadenced humming lends
A rhythm like the sound of distant bells.



"Canterbury bells"

AT TOUCH OF SPRING

But yesterday

They kept, tight-folded, all their sweetness in
Nor deigned to share it. Then did Spring begin
To coax each bud. Warm rain and sunny day
Have worked the magic and each spendthrift breeze
Carries a wealth of fragrance and the trees
On every hill are blossoming, are blossoming
At touch of Spring.

PILFERED SWEETS

Bees to honey-suckle stealing,
Blooms too deep your sweets concealing—
So to bandit hordes appealing
Your sweetness and your flavour.

Humming-birds like swift thoughts darting,
Wav'ring, ling'ring—sudden starting,
Airy grace that makes sad parting,
Their trust their faith, their favor.

Spendthrift of your sweets, beguiling
Thieves by vain flirtatious smiling.
Small the wonder by such wiling
They seek to taste, to savor.

THE IRIS BORDER

Iris border all a-bloom. Lavenders and blues,
Yellows in their many tints do our choice confuse.
All to sight are beautiful. Orchid-like they bloom
Making of this sheltered spot a lovely fragrant room.
Pallida Dalmatica, stately name and flower,
Sweetest blossom of them all. Yours the crowning
hour.

Lavish of the sweetness in your orange-flower scent,
Odors of fair Araby in its fragrance blent.
Queen you are and should be ever. Charms that will
not pall
Yours by right and not by favor, sweetest of them all.



"The iris border"

THE EVENING SKY

The white moonlight like silver rain sifts through
the leafy trees;

Through ghostly mist of amethyst and yellow shines
the moon.

A lovely sight the dappled white adrift before the
breeze,

The sky doth try her beauties all to show in one
glad June.

Last night the light still fairer was as fell the
evening down.

The western sky as day did die held all the passing
throng.

The western glow did linger so they watched it from
the town,

Forgot their lot, and on the sky read plain God's
even-song.

MY NEIGHBOR ELM

Where late you showed against the sky
In tracings intricate and fine
I now look into leafy lanes
Where birds do nest and fledglings fly
In crude and clumsy travesty
Of task set for them and their gains
You seem to note, oh friendly tree, the same as mine.

Benevolence and stately grace
Are yours and strength and hardihood.
The sunshine falls upon your head
Undimmed through years that leave no trace.
You hold secure your honored place
Nor winter's stormy rigors dread,
Such storms you've weathered, friendly tree, such
 gales withstood.

NEW HAMPSHIRE WOODS

I close my eyes and see trees stretch away
In aisles and vistas whose beginnings here
Picked out in vivid colors once have flamed
Upon my sight. Hear all around
Above and underfoot the soft light sound
Of autumn leaves' slow falling. Tang of frost in air
And squirrels busy frisking everywhere.
The summer's radiance somehow tamed
Yet all renewed as the declining year
Brings us its choicest, an October day.



"New Hampshire woods"

NOON-TIME SHOWER

Crashing their noisy way the leafy maples through
The summer rain-drops fall in sudden shower
And children hurrying from school
Take refuge where they may, so straight and true
Do fall the heavy drops. The air is cool
And sweet; new-washed each shining leaf and flower.

BARE BOUGHS

Grateful and cool the shade
When thick the leaves grew on each clustering bough,
But now, when I their course can trace
Against the sky where bare they interlace
I think they never made
A picture fair as they do now.

All one expanse of green,
There was small difference on summer day,
But now each line some beauty shows
And like a lovely etching grows.
Against the sky is seen
In tracing clear their devious way.

Color and form they show,
Likeness and infinite diversity.
Drawn by a master hand they mark
In clear unerring way the dark
Bold lines that vary so.
How quick we know each differing tree!

The autumn sky is cold
And chill the autumn winds around them blow,
But sturdily they face the wind
That has their fading foliage thinned,
And bared the branches old
Which green another spring will show.

LATE ROSE

All the bright beauty of a summer dead
Shines in your face and form, O rose of mine!
Blooming so late dressed all in dusky red
With shades and broiderings and graceful line
That speaks to me of beauty like your own
Which lately shown in this loved garden spot
Where now I come to mourn them and alone
I find you blooming gaily, though forgot.

Your petals softly modelled, are as sweet
As those your sister roses wore of late.
Sweeter perhaps, I know not, and you greet
Me with a courage and a grace sedate.
For you no sunny sky or langourous days.
For you the autumn's chill and clouded sky.
One burst of sunshine—to our wondering gaze
You hold out promise fair and message high.

Prized far beyond those others who did late
Crowd in such bright profusion, summer-kissed,
And for your gay presumption, some kind fate
Has kept for you alone the joy they missed.
Supreme you reign over the garden you
Would have bloomed in unnoticed months ago;
And for your daring we give homage true.
A Queen of roses, may you linger so!



"Late rose"







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